

Mr. Speaker, we owe a debt of gratitude to each and every one of them and to all who defend our freedom by serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is my honor to recognize these young leaders here today.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF HUGH
M. FLANAGAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge Hugh Michael Flanagan who will retire from the Merced County Superior Court after thirteen years of service. His service and dedication to the people of central California is to be commended.

Judge Flanagan was raised in Fortville, Indiana where he completed his grammar and high school education. He received his Bachelor's degree in Engineering from Purdue University and his Master's degree in Engineering from Michigan State University. Judge Flanagan is also a graduate with distinction from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

While in the United States Navy, Judge Flanagan worked as a Senior Systems Engineer with the Deep Submarine Rescue Vehicle Program and the Omega Navigation System. He completed his career with the United States Navy as a Captain, JAGC, USNR. Following his service in the military, Judge Flanagan earned his law degree from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. He worked as a lawyer for five years in Los Angeles before opening his private practice law firm in Merced in 1975, which he maintained for 25 years. He was elected to the Merced County Superior Court in 2000, where he was able to continue his lifelong tradition of public service.

Being an active member of his community is something of utmost importance to Judge Flanagan. He is a Past President of the Merced County Bar Association and the Merced Rotary Club and has been active in numerous other civic organizations and fundraising activities. His invaluable service to our community illustrates his helpful nature and commitment to the betterment of Merced County.

In 1962, Judge Flanagan married his beautiful wife, Norma Colegrove Flanagan in Champaign, Illinois. Together, they have four grown, married sons and six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Judge Hugh Michael Flanagan for his efforts and dedication to the Superior Court of California and the County of Merced. He exemplifies the best of what our nation has to offer and his dedication to justice is truly admirable.

TRASH REDUCTION ACT OF 2013

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, our 315 million American citizens throw away nearly 496 billion pounds of trash each year, a staggering

amount by any analysis. And a sizable contribution is from disposable items, including plastic and paper bags. That's why today, one day after Earth Day, I am introducing the "Trash Reduction Act of 2013" along with my colleagues Representatives ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, EARL BLUMENAUER and JOHN GARAMENDI.

The legislation is modeled after the District of Columbia's "bag tax." Five cents would be levied on each disposable paper or plastic bag. Revenue from the tax would support the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Just how bad is the trash problem? According to the U.S. EPA, the average American throws away about 4.4 pounds of trash each day or 1,600 pounds per year. That's nearly 248 million tons of American garbage each year. To put that in perspective, it's enough trash to fill a football-field-sized hole over 93 miles deep. Or create a similar-sized stack of garbage that reaches low earth orbit. This amount of trash could cover the state of Texas two and a half times or fill enough trash trucks to form a line to the moon.

We consume an estimated 12 million barrels of oil and copious amounts of natural gas annually to make plastic bags that are used once or twice, then tossed into the garbage. The U.S. International Trade Commission reported in 2009 that 102 billion plastic bags were used in the U.S. Much of the oil and natural gas used in those bags comes from foreign countries and it's all non-renewable. Once it's used for plastic bags and thrown away, that energy is gone forever.

Disposable paper bags are no better. In 1999, 14 million trees were cut to produce the 10 billion paper grocery bags used by Americans that year alone. Paper and paperboard products made up 28.5 percent of the municipal waste discarded in 2010—more than any other type of refuse measured by tonnage. According to the Environmental Paper Network, the pulp and paper industry is the fourth largest emitter of greenhouse gases among manufacturing industries, contributing 9 percent of total manufacturing-related carbon dioxide emissions. Most of energy use comes from powering paper mills.

There is no doubt that disposable retail plastic and paper bags are bad for the environment. Both paper and plastic bags consume valuable natural resources, generate profuse waste, and pollute the environment. They keep us dependent on nonrenewable resources like foreign oil and impose burdens that Americans bear in the form of higher garbage costs, visual blight, and the destruction of wildlife. Millions of animals are entangled in or ingest plastic waste. That same waste leaches toxins into the ground and our drinking water.

While recycling efforts should be applauded, recycling rates are dismally low. Only between one and three percent of all plastic bags are recycled, with a slightly higher ten to 15 percent paper-bag-recycling rate. Plus, the recycling process uses energy, water, and generates additional greenhouse gasses.

But we can do something about this gargantuan garbage nightmare. We can reduce the number of bags we use with market-based incentives. Requiring shoppers to internalize the costs of disposable bags has been shown to dramatically reduce their use and substantially increase reusable bag utilization. For example, after placing a fee on plastic bags, Ire-

land reportedly reduced consumption by 90 percent. China, after banning the use of ultra-thin plastic bags, is estimated to have eliminated 40 billion bags in the first year.

Critics have called this a regressive tax that falls on poor communities. This is simply untrue. Wealthy Americans consume substantially more resources and disposable shopping bags than the poor. Additionally, Americans of all incomes can purchase or be given a reusable bag and avoid this fee altogether. Plus, this fee is good for business. Business will be able to recoup their investment of time and effort through a tax credit and profits from reusable bag sales.

One need look no further than the District of Columbia to measure success. In 2009 the District imposed a five-cent tax on plastic bags that led to spectacular reductions in disposable bag use. The number of plastic bags dropped from the 2009 monthly average of 22.5 million to just 3 million per month by the end of 2010. River cleanup volunteers reported over a 60 percent decrease in the volume of plastic bags they collected during cleanup activities—and this was only three months after the fee took effect.

D.C. businesses approve of the fee as well. 78 percent of businesses interviewed report either a positive or neutral impact on their business. People keep shopping and keep buying. 58 percent of D.C. business owners say the law has not affected their sales. And it's those dire predictions of falling sales that were used to scare business owners into opposing the fee. It's one of the many false predictions of bag-fee opponents like the American Chemistry Council.

The public and many elected officials are not always in sync with what we need to do to improve this great country. High-pressure lobbying by powerful chemical interests sometimes stops us from doing what's right. While we can be proud of our environmental achievements and landmark laws, we need to do more to reduce our mountains of trash madness. Nothing is more fitting for this year's Earth Day celebration than helping reduce garbage.

This small disposable bag charge helps people understand that paper and plastic bags are not without cost. They impact the environment, support foreign dictators, and make Everest's of trash. Our bill begins to shift America away from its current disposable culture back to a simpler time when Americans understood the value of reusing what they bought.

IN HONOR OF THE SIXTH GRADE
CLASS OF LAUREL SPRINGS
SCHOOL

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of the sixth grade class of Laurel Springs School. These students took it upon themselves to honor the centennial of their hometown by writing and performing in a historical play last week.

The sixth graders involved with putting on the play to honor the history of their town are Olivia Baldino, Kejsi Bocaj, William Brandley, Elizabeth Brown, Joelle Burns, Craig Caruso,

Alijah Caul, Hannah Crane, Gabrielle Daniels, Joseph DeBlasio, Madison Dempsey, Leya Erdman, John Fox, Samantha Gross, Zachary Knight, Briana Lucha, Rachel Mai, Jarred Matchett, Joshua Matchett, Hannah McLaughlin, Stephen McLaughlin, Matthew Michielli, Riley Molway, Minas Nicoludis, Anthony Nocito, Briana Novoa, Cain Pipitone, Dominic Rattell, Melanie Schmidt, Alexandra Simber, Gian Sinfuego, Taylor Swan, Christopher Thatcher, Daniel Trantas, Sophia Troilo, and William Waer. The director is Mrs. Lucinda Garvey and the scenes were all hand-painted by Mrs. Kristen Laurenzi and Mrs. Pam Laurenzi.

The students from the class also interviewed Mr. Rich Zimmerman, a longtime resident of Laurel Springs. After gathering information about the town, they wrote their play based on Mr. Zimmerman's knowledge. These exceptional students were very excited to celebrate Laurel Spring's history and to sing happy birthday to the town after the play. The class' efforts to commemorate their town exemplify a strong dedication to learning and an outstanding commitment to their community. I urge them to continue to practice civic engagement and academic curiosity as they grow older.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF FATHER JUNIPERO SERRA'S BIRTH

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Father Junipero Serra's birth.

Father Serra was born in Petra, Mallorca, Spain in 1713. After studying theology and being ordained to the Catholic priesthood, Serra left his beloved homeland in Mallorca and journeyed across continents and oceans in order to reach the New World.

Upon Serra's arrival on the West Coast of North America in 1769, he began founding a chain of missions that would eventually stretch from San Diego in the south to Solano in the north. This chain of 21 missions has developed into some of the central cities and towns of modern day California.

In what is now my Congressional district, Father Serra founded Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa. Since its establishment in 1772, this small Spanish outpost has grown into the beautiful city of San Luis Obispo.

Today, Father Serra's legacy is still present in San Luis Obispo and throughout California. The cultural and spiritual heritage of Serra continues as an enduring, living tradition and has shaped various aspects of Californian life up to the present day. Indeed, a statue of Father Serra now stands in the United States Capitol's Statuary Hall in Washington, DC, attesting to his profound influence in the shaping of American history.

This week, Palma de Mallorca, Spain will host a festival commemorating the occasion titled "300 años de Junip Serra (300 Years of Junipero Serra)." I send my best wishes for a wonderful celebration as Spain recognizes Father Serra's significant contribution to American and Spanish history and reflects on his cultural and spiritual legacy.

IN HONOR OF KELLOGG MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Kellogg Middle School in Rochester, Minnesota.

Named after the Honorable Frank Kellogg, a citizen of Rochester who served as Secretary of State under President Coolidge, Kellogg Middle School celebrates its 50th year of existence in 2013.

As a social studies teacher at Mankato West, I know how important it is to develop our next generation of leaders. The shared dedication of teachers, staff, and parents at Kellogg Middle School has produced grade-A education for the past half-century and will continue to nurture students for years to come.

Secretary Kellogg devoted his life to the cause of peace and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1929. Kellogg Middle School carries on his legacy by teaching students to work together so everyone can achieve their full potential. That's a lesson for us all.

Over the last half century, the Frank B. Kellogg Middle School has instilled its proud tradition of education and excellence into their students today. The Kellogg Middle School is the oldest middle school in Rochester, and remains to this day the choice for students, parents, and teachers alike.

Just as Secretary Kellogg serves as an inspiration for southern Minnesotans, I am confident that Kellogg Middle School provides its graduates with the skills they need to succeed and maybe even one day win a Nobel Prize.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Kellogg Middle School for its 50 years of service to the students of Rochester.

CELEBRATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FT. SHERMAN TOWNSHIP

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the establishment of Ft. Sherman Township, a community of about 200 people, and to applaud the efforts of Titus County Historical Preservation Society, Titus County Historical Commission, Bob Sandlin State Park, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in working together to protect and preserve the location and rich history of Ft. Sherman.

Established in 1838, Ft. Sherman was the first community in southwest Titus County. It was built by Captain William Stout and members of the Red River Mounted Rangers, who are now considered to be Early Texas Rangers. Ft. Sherman was named in honor of Colonel Sidney Sherman, the Commander of the Left Wing of the Republic of Texas Army at the Battle of San Jacinto. Ft. Sherman's namesake famously originated the Battle Cry, "Remember the Alamo!"

The Fort served many purposes during its early years, functioning as a refuge for fami-

lies against Indian attacks and a resting place for early Texas Ranger units from 1838–1841, a voting place for several elections between 1842 and 1846, and a military waypoint during the War with Mexico in 1846.

Today, I am pleased to join the Titus County Historical Preservation Society and Titus County Historical Commission in honoring the early Texas families and military units for their self-reliance, independence, and role in Ft. Sherman's history. Yesterday, these organizations' efforts to have the Titus Commissioners Court approve a resolution were rewarded, and Saturday, June 8, 2013 has been declared "Fort Sherman Day."

I join my constituents of Titus County in celebrating Historic Ft. Sherman and its founding nearly 175 years ago, and I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Titus County's historical preservation efforts of Ft. Sherman.

IN HONOR OF THE DELAWARE COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Delaware County Veterans Memorial in my home state of Pennsylvania and the tremendous work done by Memorial's Board of Directors and its founding member, Claude de Botton and his daughter, Nicole de Botton Robinson, to make their vision a reality. The memorial, opening to the public next month, is a fitting tribute to the veterans of Delaware County. Engraved in the memorial's columns are the names of the Delaware County men and women who gave their lives in defense of American liberty. Our nation owes a debt of gratitude to its veterans that can never be repaid, but the Delaware County Veterans' Memorial will honor our veterans and ensure their sacrifices will always be remembered by future generations of Delaware County families.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A US-MOROCCAN RELATIONSHIP

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reflect on the importance of US-Morocco bilateral relations—a friendship that has strongly endured for over 225 years because of shared interests and mutual respect. At a time when recent reports suggest that the relationship has come under some strain, we must remember that our relationship with Morocco is more important than ever and it will not be jeopardized. The Maghreb and Sahel are increasingly threatened by instability and insecurity emanating from the terrorist groups operating in Northern Mali and elsewhere, the United States' relationships with key allies in the region becomes all the more important. US-Morocco relations remain strong, based on a shared commitment to promoting peace, security, and human rights throughout North Africa and the wider Middle East. The US